A U M

The end of wisdom is consultation and deliberation.—DEMOSTHENES

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THE WORK OF STUDY

THE philosophy of Theosophy imposes unusual obligations upon its students, for the study of Theosophy is a science in itself. It is not study in the sense of an exploration of the thoughts and opinions, the conclusions or reasoning, of other men. To study Theosophy in a way that brings comprehension is to step outside oneself in order to look within.

The teachers of Theosophy have always discouraged the notion that its doctrines need simply to be added to ideas already held. They have warned instead that the theosophist must abandon the trodden routines of thought, and that to the "satisfied"—to the mentally lazy or obtuse—Theosophy must remain a riddle. On this statement itself, as on any theosophical explanation, the principle of theosophical study may be practised—if the student is determined to know the nature of *man,* instead of merely accumulating information, or storing away ethical codes by which others may be judged. The statement can be seen to imply that if and when Theosophy presents riddles to one's understanding, the mental condition of the puzzler is to be held responsible, and that every theosophical doctrine *may* begin as a riddle for the student.

Stepping outside oneself in order to look within need not be regarded as an unnatural operation, nor as a hazardous withdrawal from the only reality we are sure of. The self we can step out of cannot be our true being, for with the Self there is neither going nor returning—only existence. The Self governs the apprehension of truth. The soul looks directly upon ideas, but such is the refraction intro-

duced by the medium of the other self, or the not-self, that the mind does not focus on realities. The power to focus on the real in all things and beings is the only power "conferred" by Theosophy: "the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the non-existent." Study of Theosophy, therefore, is the exercise of discernment and discrimination, rather than the accumulation of mental luggage, no matter how attractively packaged or compactly arranged. It means assuming the position that there *is* a theosophy or knowledge, and studying all else from that point of view. Only thus can Theosophy be verified by the individual. When the methods of ordinary study are applied to Theosophy, the common effect is either intellectual excitement that, soon or late, is surfeited and expires; or intellectual rebellion at vaulting hypotheses, "metaphysical" assertions, and at an unparalleled audacity in realms which —whether held sacred or suppositional—are usually not a subject for *study*.

If Theosophy were presented as a revelation, it would find ready acceptance in several quarters. This is no conjecture, but a fact from history: when the Messianic urge takes hold of one in the theosophical ranks, "theosophy" emerges as a religion and flourishes like the green bay tree, drawing into its conformable shade a host of relaxed minds and uncritical believers. As the years go by, the religion becomes increasingly conventional, finally taking its place beside other opiates of the mind. But Theosophy itself can hardly be confused with such comfortable doctrines, for Theosophy is always a disturbing philosophy. No matter how much a man may know of life and being, he cannot take up the *study* of Theosophy without arriving at the disturbing realization that there is more—and more—to be understood. But, again, it will be the not-self which suffers this disturbance, because inertia is its nature and fixity its goal. The ever-striving soul must be constantly cutting away its personal moorings in order that its voyage may continue.

None but ourselves can weigh anchor for us, and this is the real reason why Theosophy is not, nor ever was, "revealed" to any one. Not the clearest intellect nor the warmest humanitarianism will enable one to open the theosophical view before the eyes of another. *Seeing* an idea is an intensely individual matter, a form of growth which proceeds in its own cycle, and is but slightly modified by the

pressure of outside circumstances or other beings. As one theosophical educator has written:

> We cannot be told truths which do not already potentially exist in ourselves. We may hear them but they pass by and leave no trace. This is what Jesus meant when he said: "To him that hath shall be given"; and in the Hermetic philosophy it is plainly stated: "Do not think that I tell you what you know not; I only tell what you knew before."

The complement of this passage, which otherwise might stand as warrant for an attempt to pursue knowledge by and for oneself, is that we see ourselves more clearly in the light of a common brotherhood. "The important thing is to develop the self in the Self, and then the possessions of wisdom belonging to all wise men at once belong to us." Brotherhood is itself a form of wisdom, and it is the *brotherhood* of the wise that most attests their wisdom. This is perhaps the reason why H. P. Blavatsky claimed no unique knowledge, but referred to a company of teachers who shared with her the truths they had mastered together. In the preface to *The Secret Doctrine* she wrote: "this work is a partial statement of what [the author] herself has been taught by more advanced students, supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation."

The *Secret Doctrine* Preface is an extremely selective document, for in it H.P.B. delineates, point by point, the only type of mind which can be expected to see Theosophy steadily, and "see it whole." First, she declines to apologize for deficiencies of style or language, thus eliminating that segment of the non-discriminating public for whom the style is the man, the idea and the truth. The philosophical mind is prepared for inadequacies of language; it does not look to words alone for illumination. Words are as a swaying bridge over which one must precariously make his way: only vision fixed on the "other side" can steady and secure his passage. There are some who consider that they have learned from *The Secret Doctrine,* and others who find in it nothing at all. Both are sincere in their declarations, except that the first have managed to *cross* the bridge.

H.P.B. further remarks that her "sole advantage" is that she "need not resort to personal speculations and theories." How many of her readers join her in considering that qualification an advantage? How many automatically prefer their own speculations—however pecu-

liar and unsupportable by reason and law—to anything the *S.D.* may have to offer? This is any man's privilege, but it also constitutes his refusal to accept H.P.B.'s invitation—the challenge of every theosophical teacher and of Theosophy itself—to take up the discipline of study. Theosophy is not contained in a set of books or ideas. It is a body of principles built of the soul's experience and emancipation. Study of Theosophy, therefore, can in a very real sense be called the work of the soul, and that evolution partakes of no special gifts or privileges: authority, revelation and demonstration are in *the man himself,* to be developed only by self-induced and self-devised efforts. In the unity of study and work is the key to Theosophy.

"AN INTEGRAL CYCLE"

The *Secret Doctrine* asserts that a system, known as the WISDOM RELIGION, the work of generations of adepts and seers, the sacred heirloom of pre-historic times—actually exists, though hitherto preserved in the greatest secrecy by the present Initiates; and it points to various corroborations of its existence to this very day, to be found in ancient and modern works. Giving a few fragments only, it there shows how these explain the religious dogmas of the present day, and how they might serve Western religions, philosophies and science, as sign-posts along the untrodden paths of discovery. It is also maintained that its doctrines and sciences, which form an integral cycle of universal cosmic facts and metaphysical axioms and truths, represent a complete and unbroken system; and that he who is brave and persevering enough, ready to crush the *animal* in himself, and forgetting the human *self,* sacrifices it to his Higher Ego, can always find his way to become initiated into these mysteries. This is all the *Secret Doctrine* claims. —H.P.B.

"THE THEOSOPHICAL MAHATMAS"

[The history of the present Theosophical Movement is in one sense a series of case histories on the various types of men—minds and hearts—who have encountered Theosophy, and on their disposition of "opportunities which seldom the gods repeat." Theosophy presents the student, as in the fable of old, with an Ariadne's thread, as well as with a labyrinth. Often, it appears, when the mazes of the labyrinth are once entered, the student will let go the thread of philosophy and abandon himself to psychic divagations. This puzzling phenomenon is the subject of the present article by H. P. Blavatsky, but the explanation is here only in principle, and the problem can be expected to survive all "answers" until each questioner and student solves it for himself.

The historical background of this article will be found in *The Theosophical Movement,* and is briefly recounted in THEOSOPHY XIV, 126. Of correlative articles by H.P.B., two may be suggested here: "She Being Dead, Yet Speaketh" (THEOSOPHY XXXI, 291) and "H. P. Blavatsky on Precipitation" (III, 161). "The Theosophical Mahatmas" was originally published by Mr. Judge in the first volume of the *Path* Magazine, December, 1886.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

IT is with sincere and profound regret—though with no surprise, prepared as I am for years for such declarations—that I have read in the Rochester *Occult Word,* edited by Mrs. J. Cables, the devoted president of the T.S. of that place, her joint editorial with Mr. W. T. Brown. This sudden revulsion of feeling is perhaps quite natural in the lady, for she has never had the opportunities given her as Mr. Brown has; and her feeling, when she writes that after "a great desire . . . to be put into communication with the Theosophical Mahatmas we [they] have come to the conclusion that it is useless to strain the psychical eyes toward the Himalayas . . ."—is undeniably shared by many theosophists. Whether the complaints are justified, and also whether it is the "Mahatmas" or theosophists themselves who are to blame for it, is a question that remains to be settled. It has been a pending case for several years and will have to be now decided, as the two complainants declare over their signatures that "we [they] need not run after Oriental Mystics, *who deny their ability to help us.*" The

last sentence, in italics, has to be seriously examined. I ask the privilege to make a few remarks thereon.

To begin with, the tone of the whole article is that of a true *manifesto.* Condensed and weeded of its exuberance of Biblical expressions it comes to this paraphrastical declaration: "We have knocked at their door, and they have not answered us; we have prayed for bread, they have denied us even a stone." The charge is quite serious; nevertheless, that it is neither just nor fair—is what I propose to show.

As I was the first in the United States to bring the existence of our Masters into publicity; and, having exposed the holy names of two members of a Brotherhood hitherto unknown to Europe and America (save to a few mystics and Initiates of every age), yet sacred and revered throughout the East, and especially India, causing vulgar speculation and curiosity to grow around those blessed names, and finally leading to a public rebuke, I believe it my duty to contradict the fitness of the latter by explaining the whole situation, as I feel myself the chief culprit. It may do good to some, perchance, and will interest some others.

Let no one think withal, that I come out as a champion or a defender of those who most assuredly need no defense. What I intend is, to present simple *facts,* and let after this the situation be judged on its own merits. To the plain statement of our brothers and sisters that they have been "living on husks," "hunting after strange gods" without receiving admittance, I would ask in my turn, as plainly: "Are you sure of having knocked at the right door? Do you feel certain that you have not lost your way by *stopping so often on your journey at strange doors, behind which lie in wait the fiercest enemies of those you were searching for?"* Our MASTERS are not "a jealous god"; they are simply holy mortals, nevertheless, however, higher than any in this world, morally, intellectually and spiritually. However holy and advanced in the science of the Mysteries—they are still men, members of a Brotherhood, who are the first in it to show themselves subservient to its time-honored laws and rules. And one of the first rules in it demands that those who start on their journey *Eastward,* as candidates to the notice and favors of those who are the custodians of those Mysteries, should proceed by the straight road, without stopping

on every sideway and path, seeking to join other "Masters," and professors often of the Left-Hand Science; that they should have confidence and show trust and patience, besides several other conditions to fulfill. Failing in all this from first to last, what right has any man or woman to complain of the liability of the Masters to help them?

Truly " 'The Dwellers of the threshold' are within!"

Once that a theosophist would become a candidate for either *chelaship* or favors, he must be aware of the mutual pledge, tacitly, if not formally offered and accepted between the two parties, and, *that such a pledge is sacred.* It is a bond of *seven* years of probation. If during that time, notwithstanding the many human shortcomings and mistakes of the candidates (save two which it is needless to specify in print) he remains throughout every temptation *true to the chosen Master,* or Masters (in the case of *lay* candidates), and as faithful to the Society founded at their wish and under their orders, then the theosophist will be initiated into ——— thenceforward allowed to communicate with his *guru* unreservedly; all his failings, save this one, as specified, may be overlooked: they belong to his future *Karma,* but are left, for the present, to the discretion and judgment of the Master. He alone has the power of judging whether even during those long seven years the *chela* will be favoured regardless of his mistakes and sins, with occasional communications with, and from, the guru. The latter thoroughly posted as to the causes and motives that led the candidate into sins of omission and commission is the only one to judge of the advisability or inadvisability of bestowing encouragement; as he alone is entitled to it, seeing that he is himself under the inexorable law of Karma, which no one from the Zulu savage up to the highest archangel can avoid—and that he has to assume the great responsibility of the causes created by himself.

Thus, the chief and the only indispensable condition required in the candidate or chela on probation, is simply unswerving fidelity to the chosen Master and his purposes. This is a condition *sine qua non;* not as I have said, on account of any jealous feeling, but simply because *the magnetic rapport between the two once broken, it becomes at each time doubly difficult to re-establish it again;* and that it is neither just nor fair, that the Masters should strain

their powers for those whose future course and final desertion they very often can plainly foresee. Yet, how many of those who, expecting as I would call it "favours by anticipation," and being disappointed, instead of humbly repeating *mea culpa,* tax the Masters with selfishness and injustice. They will deliberately break the thread of connection ten times in one year, and yet expect each time to be taken back on the old lines! I know of one theosophist—let him be nameless though it is hoped he will recognize himself—a quiet, intelligent young gentleman, a mystic by nature, who, in his ill-advised enthusiasm and impatience, changed *Masters* and his ideas about half a dozen times in less than three years. First he offered himself, was accepted on probation and took the vow of chelaship; about a year later, he suddenly got the idea of getting married, though he had several proofs of the corporeal presence of his Master, and had several favours bestowed upon him. Projects of marriage failing, he sought "Masters" under other climes, and became an enthusiastic Rosicrucian; then he returned to theosophy as a Christian mystic; then again sought to enliven his austerities with a wife; then gave up the idea and turned a spiritualist. And now having applied once more "to be taken back as a chela" (I have his letter) and his Master remaining silent—he renounced him altogether, to seek in the words of the above manifesto—his old "Essenian Master and *to test the spirits* in his name."

The able and respected editor of the *Occult Word* and her Secretary are right, and have chosen the only true path in which with a very small dose of blind faith, they are sure to encounter no deceptions or disappointments. "It is pleasant for some of us," they say, "to obey the call of the 'Man of Sorrows' who will not turn any away, because they are unworthy or have not scored up a certain percentage of personal merit." How *do* they know? unless they accept the cynically awful and pernicious dogma of the Protestant Church, that teaches the forgiveness of the blackest crime, provided the murderer *believes sincerely* that the blood of his "Redeemer" has saved him at the last hour—what is it but *blind* unphilosophical faith? Emotionalism is *not* philosophy; and Buddha devoted his long self-sacrificing life to tear people away precisely from that *evil breeding* superstition. Why speak of Buddha, then, in the same breath? The doctrine of salvation by *personal* merit, and *self* for-

getfulness is the corner-stone of the teaching of the Lord Buddha. Both the writers may have and very likely they did—"hunt after *strange* gods"; but these *were not our* MASTERS. They have "denied Him thrice" and now propose "with bleeding feet and prostrate spirit" to "pray that He [Jesus] may take us [them] once more under his wing," etc. The "Nazarene Master" is sure to oblige them so far. Still they will be "living on *husks*" *plus* "blind faith." But in this they are the best judges, and no one has a right to meddle with their private beliefs in our Society; and heaven grant that they should not in their fresh disappointment turn our bitterest enemies one day.

Yet, to those Theosophists who are displeased with the Society in general, no one has ever made to you any rash promises; least of all, has either the Society or its founders ever offered their "Masters" as a *chromo-premium* to the best-behaved. For years every new member has been told that *he was promised nothing,* but had everything to expect only from his own personal merit. The Theosophist is left free and untrammeled in his actions. Whenever displeased—*alia tentanda via est*—no harm in trying elsewhere; unless, indeed, one has offered himself and is decided to win the Masters' favors. To such especially, I now address myself and ask: Have you fulfilled *your* obligations and pledges? Have you, who would fain lay all the blame on the Society and the Masters—the latter the embodiment of charity, tolerance, justice and universal love—have you *led the life* requisite, and [fulfilled] the conditions required from one who becomes a candidate? Let him who feels in his heart and conscience that he has,—that he has never once failed seriously, never doubted his Master's wisdom, never sought *other* Master or Masters in his impatience to become an Occultist with powers; and that he has never betrayed his theosophical duty in thought or deed, —let him, I say, rise and *protest.* He can do so fearlessly; there is no penalty attached to it, and he will not even receive a reproach, let alone be excluded from the Society—the broadest and most liberal in its views, the most catholic of all the Societies known or unknown. I am afraid my invitation will remain unanswered. During the eleven years of the existence of the Theosophical Society I have known, out of the seventy-two regularly accepted chelas on probation and the hundreds of *lay* candidates—only *three* who

have not hitherto failed, and *one only* who had a full success. No one forces anyone into chelaship; no promises are uttered, none except the mutual pledge between Master and the would-be chela. Verily, Verily, many are the called but few are chosen—or rather few who have the patience of going to the bitter end, if bitter we can call simple perseverence and singleness of purpose.

What about the Society, in general, outside of India? Who among the many thousands of members does *lead the life?* Shall anyone say because he is a strict vegetarian—*elephants and cows are that*—or happens to lead a celibate life, after a stormy youth in the opposite direction; or because he studies the *Bhagavad-Gita* or the "Yoga philosophy" *upside down,* that he is a theosophist *according to the Masters' hearts?* As it is not the cowl that makes the monk, so, no long hair with a poetical vacancy on the brow are sufficient to make of one a faithful follower of *divine* Wisdom. Look around you, and behold our UNIVERSAL Brotherhood so called! The Society founded to remedy the glaring evils of Christianity, to shun bigotry and intolerance, *cant* and superstition and to cultivate real universal love extending even to the dumb brute, what has it become in Europe and America in these eleven years of trial? In one thing only we have succeeded to be considered higher than our Christian Brothers, who, according to Lawrence Oliphant's graphic expression, "kill one another for Brotherhood's sake and fight as devils for the love of God"—and this is that we have made away *with every dogma* and are now justly and wisely trying to make away with the last vestige of even nominal authority. But in every other respect we are as bad as they are: backbiting, slander, uncharitableness, criticism, incessant war-cry and ding of mutual rebukes that Christian Hell itself might be proud of! And all this, I suppose, is the Masters' fault: THEY will not help those who help others on the way of salvation and liberation from selfishness—with kicks and scandals? Truly *we are* an example to the world, and fit companions for the holy ascetics of the snowy Range!

And now a few words more before I close. I will be asked: "And who are you to find fault with us? Are you, who nevertheless claim communion with the Masters and receive daily favors from Them: Are you so holy, faultless, and so worthy?" To this I answer: I AM NOT. Imperfect and faulty is my nature; many and glaring

are my shortcomings—and for this my Karma is heavier than that of any other Theosophist. *It is*—and must be so—since for so many years I stand set in the pillory, a target for my enemies and some friends also. Yet I accept the *trial* cheerfully. Why? Because I know that I have, all my faults notwithstanding, Master's protection extended over me. And if I have it, the reason for it is simply this: for thirty-five years and more, ever since 1851 that I saw any Master *bodily* and personally for the first time, *I have never once denied or even doubted Him,* not even in thought. Never a reproach or a murmur against Him has escaped my lips, or entered even my brain for one instant under the heaviest trials. From the first I knew what I had to expect, for I was told that, which I have never ceased repeating to others: as soon as one steps on the Path leading to the *Ashrum* of the blessed Masters—the last and only custodians of primitive Wisdom and Truth—his Karma, instead of having to be distributed throughout his long life, falls upon him in a block and crushes him with its whole weight. He who believes in what he professes and in his Master, will stand it and come out of the trial victorious; he *who doubts,* the coward who fears to receive his just dues and tries to avoid justice being done—FAILS. He will not escape Karma just the same, but he will only lose that for which he has risked its untimely visits. This is why, having been so constantly, so mercilessly slashed by my Karma using my enemies as unconscious weapons, that I have stood it all. I felt sure that Master would not permit that I should perish; that he would always appear at the *eleventh* hour—*and so he did.* Three times I was saved from death by Him, the last time almost against my will; when I went again into the cold, wicked world out of love for Him, who has taught me what I know and made me what I am. Therefore, I do His work and bidding, and this is what has given me the lion's strength to support shocks—physical and mental, one of which would have killed any theosophist who would go on doubting of the mighty protection. Unswerving devotion to Him who embodies the duty traced for me, and belief in the Wisdom, collectively, of that grand, mysterious, yet actual Brotherhood of holy men—is my only merit, and the cause of my success in Occult philosophy. And now repeating after the *Paraguru*—my Master's MASTER—the words He had sent as a message to those who wanted to make of the

Society a "miracle club" instead of a Brotherhood of Peace, Love and mutual assistance—"Perish rather, the Theosophical Society and its hapless Founders," I say perish their twelve years' labor and their very lives rather than that I should see what I do today: theosophists, outvying political "rings" in their search for personal power and authority; theosophists slandering and criticizing each other as two rival Christian sects might do; finally theosophists refusing to *lead the life* and then criticizing and throwing slurs on the grandest and noblest of men, because tied by their wise laws—hoary with age and based on an experience of human nature millenniums old—those Masters refuse to interfere with Karma and to play second fiddle to every theosophist who calls upon Them and whether he deserves it or not.

Unless radical reforms in our American and European Societies are speedily resorted to—I fear that before long there will remain but one centre of Theosophical Societies and Theosophy in the whole world—namely, in India; on that country I call all the blessings of my heart. All my love and aspirations belong to my beloved brothers, the Sons of old Aryavarta—the Motherland of my MASTER.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

"THE RAYS OF TRUTH"

Let no man be unaware that while there is a great joy in this belief there is also a great sorrow. Being true, being *the Law,* all the great forces are set in motion by the student. He now thinks he has given up ambition and comfort. The ambition and comfort he has given up are those of the lower plane, the mere reflection of the great ambitions and comforts of a larger life. The rays of truth burn up the covers time has placed upon those seeds, and then the seeds begin to sprout and cause new struggles. Do not leave any earnest inquirer in ignorance of this. It has cost others many years and tears of blood to self-learn it. —W.Q.J.

MATERIALISM AND SOCIAL TRENDS

NOWHERE is the superstition of materialism more in evidence than in the political and economic fields. Man viewed as an "economic unit" and nothing else is the unpleasant offspring of the mating of the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century with the Darwinian theory of evolution. The child was left on the doorstep of what has become known as Capitalism, which subsequently shared its adoption with Marxian Socialism. It then grew up through the years into that Frankenstein monster able to exist only in a Totalitarian State, which, relieving the "economic unit" of the responsibility of thought and decision, at the same time assures him (or it) that his material needs will be satisfied, even though his freedom will be rigidly curtailed in every direction. The world is now in process of reaping the dire results of this inhuman creed, including the waging of wars which have in large part become a massacre of the innocents and an appalling perversion of mental powers. Indeed, all the proposals now extant for the establishment of a new order of society seem to be based upon theological and economic fictions as to the nature of man, and, as a consequence, may be expected to result in the death of the patient. Students will find ample material for an application of fundamental theosophical conceptions in a brief survey of this modern phase of materialistic philosophy.

In a reference to the religious aspect of Materialism, H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

> An *extra*-cosmic god is fatal to philosophy, an *intra*-cosmic Deity—*i. e.* Spirit and Matter inseparable from each other—is a philosophical necessity. Separate them, and that which is left is a gross superstition under a mask of emotionalism. (*Secret Doctrine*, II, 41.)

The emphasis may have shifted since her day to an extra-cosmic god in the guise of a Dictator-State; but it is still true that "a gross superstition under a mask of emotionalism" is the ruling attitude towards world problems and social trends. Even the scientific mind, with its bias towards law-making, cannot but look at the world as a confused and disordered scene, and most human experience con-

sists of what Plato called "opinions" (as distinct from "knowledge"), namely, beliefs which impose conflict and contradict each other, which are unrelated to truth as an objective, and which remain subject at any time to violent change by appeals to irrational and instinctive urges. It was no doubt a conviction of the distressing mutability of contemporary thought that led the historian Oswald Spengler to say, in his famous work, translated under the English title, *The Decline of the West* (1922):

> A conversion to Theosophy or Freethinking or one of the present-day transitions from a supposed Christianity to a supposed Atheism (or *vice versa*) is an alteration of words and notions, of the religious or intellectual surface, no more. None of our "movements" has changed *man*.

We may regret Spengler's suggestion that "Theosophy" (whatever may have been in his mind when he wrote the word) has not "changed *man*." The fact remains, however, that the narrative of theosophical organizations since the establishment of the Theosophical Society in 1875 does not encourage a denial of Spengler's general assumption. There is a psychical materialism, a type of religious hunt for power, which is the very negation of the spiritual life of man. The world is haunted by evil memories, *karma* of the rejection by mankind of the compassionate offerings of its long succession of spiritual Teachers.

Just as the scientific temper of the Victorian age in England was an unavoidable reaction to the growing materialism of the theological outlook, so the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels in 1848 was the natural consequence of the acceptance by a capitalistic economy of the opinion, sedulously cultivated by political economists, that man was "a unit of labour force," and that "demand and supply" were the *alpha* and *omega* of the industrial revolution, in total disregard of any ethical process. The declaration of the *Manifesto* was that all history had to be seen, not as the uprising and downfall of dynasties, but as consisting of a series of class struggles. It called on wage-earners to unite in a war to overthrow the existing system, and to replace it by what Communism to-day calls "the dictatorship of the proletariat." The theory behind this materialistic conception of history is that with a proletarian dictatorship, assumed as the result of a violent revo-

lution, all class conflicts will cease, as separate economic motives will no longer exist.

We do not need to discuss the specific merits and deficiencies of all political and social programs, but we may express a regret that hardly anyone nowadays reads John Ruskin or Edward Bellamy. The writings of such men should be compared with the philosophical claims of materialism under its various disguises, and some judgments with regard to the presently helpful or retardative forces at work in the formulation of Universal Brotherhood must be made. Two factors are of extreme importance in this investigation. First, "Brotherhood" presupposes the uniqueness of each individual. Secondly, not only have we a contemporary war of philosophies, but the *conception of philosophy* prevalently held is itself at fault. We see peoples everywhere engaged in the incessant but futile task of trying to build the House of State upon the Sands of Superstition. That a return to first principles is an urgent necessity today cannot be gainsaid by any impartial observer. What (for instance) are we to say when we find an acute and distinguished thinker like Mr. Woolf laying a foundation stone in this manner:

> The London and Paris mobs were not politically minded, but they had the ordinary man's faculty, in ordinary affairs, of putting "two and two" together. When the Englishman pulled Lord North's wig off and the Frenchman spat on the coffins of Louis XIV and Louis XV, they were applying common sense to politics and laying the foundations of the modern theory and practice of nineteenth-century democracy. They showed clearly that they knew in whose hands lay the exercise of political power, and, therefore, upon whose head lay the responsibility for the manner of its use. Particularly in France the violent alternation of love and hope followed by hatred and insult, in the attitude of the people towards their kings, is politically rational and significant. All political power was in the hands of the king, the people knew; all their political hopes were centered in him, and, when he disappointed them, he became the author of their misfortunes and the object of their anger.

Are we really expected to follow Mr. Woolf in believing that this uncouth behaviour of a hysterical mob is the application of common sense to politics, and that two historical events of this order assisted in laying the foundations of modern democracy? Or shall we not rather betake ourselves to another modulus of thought, and search

for the ineradicable roots of the democratic way of life, in any true sense, in the soul nature of man and his transition from psychic to manasic consciousness? We are bidden by the laws of existence to seek the universal man in each unit of our fellows. Here is to be found the very pith and marrow of the democratic ideal, so sadly misapplied and misinterpreted in present-day political and social usage. The world stands in dire need of a philosophy, as Plato saw it, a "way of life," a discipline of the character no less than of the understanding. It needs a realization of the fact that the fundamentally true expression of the nature of mind is the indelible aspiration after wisdom in all things, in social trends as well as in those cultural concerns that are too often narrowly "intellectualist."

It is indeed true that the experience of Occultism and the lessons of history alike are impressive in their conclusion that those who demand power in any field of human endeavour are not necessarily the best fitted to exercise it. Behind the right use of power (which often lies in its non-exercise) is a story of true tradition and disciplined efficiency. Too often, in these restless days, the groups most vociferous in behalf of totalitarianism, or of democratic and individual rights, have not the slightest intention of submitting to the philosophical regimen requisite to the right understanding and use of the science and art of power in human relationships.

Long ago it was pointed out for students of Theosophy that the age is being pushed toward extreme atheism and is in danger, on the other hand, of receding toward extreme sacerdotalism. The current of thought had to be guided away from an education which enthrones skepticism while it imprisons spirituality, and theosophists were urged to assist in directing popular attention to a philosophy germane to man as a spiritual being. The appeal (which was also a warning) went virtually unheeded, and the two devastating world wars that have since intervened have had the effect of intensifying hatreds and directing men's minds into the materialistic fallacies of what Professor R. H. Tawney has called "The Acquisitive Society," on the one hand, and the autarchic State, sustained by racial or class antagonism, on the other. The caste and creed exclusiveness which still denies a full Indian renaissance displays in the West a terrifying metamorphosis into political or economic tyranny, which, in order to retain its sovereignty, finds itself com-

pelled to resort to the murder and torture of those who oppose its will or doubt its validity.

It is the nemesis of materialism, as of a revolution, that ultimately it devours its own children. In this mid-twentieth-century era, signs are not wanting of the emergent cyclic wave of psychism, and in one of its more untoward forms—as mass hypnosis. The propaganda that so distinguishes the cultural achievement of the Modern State is hypnotic in its effects, as all may witness. In this connection, we do well to remember a corollary statement from *The Secret Doctrine:*

> The seven capital sins and the seven virtues of the Christian scheme are far less philosophical than even the Seven Liberal and the Seven Accursed Sciences—or the Seven Arts of enchantment of the Gnostics. For one of the latter is now before the public, pregnant with danger in the present as for the future. The modern name for it is HYPNOTISM. In the ignorance of the seven principles, and used by scientific and ignorant materialists, it will soon become SATANISM in the full acceptation of the term.

In the welter of opposing enchantments of an ideological nature, straight thinking becomes difficult, and man is too often left to the mercy of cyclones of passionate opinions.

Where, then, is salvation from the prevailing superstition of Materialism, with all its attendant dangers? What is to restrain the combative instinct of man? Where are to be found "the right and logical explanations on the subject of the problems of the great dual principles, right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism"? It may be truly said that the solution to the Mysteries of Being is philosophically contained in the teachings of Theosophy, as recorded for this century by H. P. Blavatsky, yet there is also a pressing need for individual application of those teachings to the problems presented by contemporary thought. In making their own contribution to the conquest of ignorance, students may be less "alone" than was the case before they strove to act from an "individual" basis. In the words of A. E. (*The Avatars,* 1933):

> A mood at once gay and solemn is born in the soul when it first discovers a path to light out of the dark cavern of the body, and is made aware of wide realms to travel in with a higher order of beings as companions.

ORIGINAL THINKERS

WHEN the Theosophical Movement was first launched in 1875, it was natural that in the minds of many people the question should arise: What is a theosophist? In spite of repeated attempts on the part of the Founders to answer, the question persists, so that it becomes necessary from time to time to re-define the term. This is a difficult matter. There are students of Theosophy who, failing to embody "the ideal," give false impressions of what a theosophist is, or ought to be. Also the mind of the race itself is saturated, as it has been for centuries, with dogmatic and sectarian beliefs, and Theosophy is a *philosophy*.

Men invariably define that which is unknown to them in terms of something they *do* know, so that when Theosophy, as a body of knowledge, is said to include, among other things, the science of religion, it is immediately supposed that a theosophist is just another brand of sectarian, one who believes in certain religious dogmas. Perhaps he resembles, it is said, the Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, or Buddhist in his thinking. Or it is thought that he is a person interested in the phenomena of occult science, much along the line of spiritualists. Theosophists have been called Theists, Atheists, Materialists, Pantheists—the definition depending usually upon the sectarian proclivities of the definer. But the fact is that none of the above titles makes of one a theosophist. "The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all." A member of any religious or scientific group can and may be a theosophist. But it is not membership in the group that makes him one. It is his open-mindedness, his toleration, his originality of thought.

> All original thinkers and investigators of the hidden side of nature, whether materialists or spiritualists, were and are properly Theosophists. For to be one, one need not necessarily recognize the existence of any special God or Deity. One need but worship the spirit of living nature, and try to identify oneself with it. . . . Be what he may—Theist, Pantheist, Atheist—once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought—Godward—he is an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth with "an inspiration of his own" to solve the universal problems. (H. P. Blavatsky)

The average member of our civilization feels abused when told that he is not an original thinker, that his mind runs in grooves. Such, nevertheless, is the fact. So accustomed is our thought to fixed patterns, so prevalent the habit of doing all thinking by proxy, that seldom do we realize how un-original we are. Where is the man, for example, who has analyzed logically the rites and beliefs of his adopted creed? Where is the man who, when he wishes to know more about trees, goes to the tree itself, and not to books? Where is to be found the person who devotes even a fraction of his time to conscious, independent thought upon some subject of common universal interest? For the most part, we merely read what other men have thought and said, and let it go at that.

It is not enough, in the spiritual evolution of soul, to merely mimic the minds of others. Man must think for himself. He must take the position that if others can know, so can he, and thus abandon forever the soul-killing tendency to rely upon external authority for truth. What benefit accrues to the child who sits idle while the parent does his home-work? What lasting good can come from being told the answer to a mathematical problem unless, at the same time, effort is made to solve it for oneself? One only becomes the more helpless and dependent upon others. And such is the condition of our race today. We make no effort to solve the universal problems for ourselves, and then complain that life seems dark and intricate. "The human weakness that makes priestly domination possible," says Robert Crosbie, "leads to spiritual darkness in course of time."

The ancient method of thought and teaching was different from that of today, where all progress is measured in terms of physical brain memory, in terms of one's ability to repeat accepted formulas. The ancients sought to reduce mechanical memory to a minimum and to stimulate original thinking on the part of the man himself. They provided the student with a basis for thinking in the form of universal principles, which were always presented, not as dogmas to be accepted, but as propositions to be checked, verified, proved. Once the truth of these propositions became self-evident to the student, he was then fitted to go directly to nature and to know for himself, to reason logically and constructively on any subject whatsoever.

The purpose of the Theosophical Movement of this age is to break the molds of the race mind, to restore to man the basis for original thinking. For to be an original thinker means neither that one starts out without basis, nor that he sets himself up as an intellectual trail-blazer, rejecting every thought or idea that does not originate in his own brain. He need not divorce himself from the well-attested Laws of Life instituted from all eternity, nor from the teachers of them. Without recognition of the knowledge of others, the independent thinker goes wide of the mark. No man is so wise or self-sufficient that he needs no help from those who know still more than he. Rather let him who would be an original thinker follow the example of the Wise Men of the early 5th Race. These teachers, H. P. Blavatsky tells us, passed *lives* in learning the laws and principles of life handed down by their Predecessors. How did they do so?

> . . . by checking, testing, and verifying in every department of nature the traditions of old by the independent visions of great adepts. . . . No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions—so obtained as to stand as independent evidence—of other adepts, and by centuries of experiences. (*S.D.* I, 273.)

Original thinking therefore is not the uncontrolled play of lower mind, but a guided exercise of the Higher. It is the tying back of all thought to *origins,* to first principles, and the conscious evaluation of every proposition from that basis. The original thinker accepts as unquestionably true only those ideas and beliefs which can be seen to stand in unbroken relationship with the whole body of universal principles that he has assimilated and made part of his inner nature, and which also check with the findings of the teacher.

The Three Fundamental Propositions of the *Secret Doctrine* are the ancient and eternal basis for right thinking. Being homogeneous with the soul itself, they awaken in man the innate spark of divinity whereby each may have "an inspiration of his own." Theosophy does not tell men *what* to think, but teaches them *how* to think. It shows that by abandoning the outworn highway of blind belief, and affirming faith in one's own inner power to know, the truth in all things may be discerned. Everything that is given in Theosophical Philosophy "is for the purpose of arousing the attention of that

Center within us which can see, which can know, which can do, when It resumes its own nature and status."

Perhaps it is clear now why a theosophist cannot be defined in terms of external considerations. He is any man of whatever race, creed, condition or organization, who has gained in some measure his spiritual orientation, and who thinks and acts from that basis. It is not necessary that one possess a particular amount of intellectual development to be a theosophist, or that he stand on a particular rung on the ladder of evolution. The theosophist is simply one who is moving forward in self-directed evolution. He is an original thinker in whom the "power of the initiatory" in right direction is active.

The Continuity of Man

We should remember that we were self-conscious beings when this planet began; some even were self-conscious when this solar system began; for there is a difference in degree of development among human beings. If the planet or solar system began in a state of primordial substance, or nebulous matter, as Science calls it, then we must have had bodies of that state of substance. In that finest substance are all the possibilities of every grade of matter, and hence it is that within the true body of primordial matter all the changes of coarser and coarser substance have been brought about; and within that body is all experience. Our birth is within that body. Everything that occurs to us is within that body—a body of a nature which does not change throughout the whole *Manvantara.* Each one has such a body of finest substance, of the inner nature, which is the real container for the individual. In it he lives and moves and has his being, and yet even the great glory and fineness of that body is not the man; it is merely the highest vesture of the Soul. The Real Man we are is the Man that was, that is, and that ever shall be, for whom the hour will never strike—Man, the thinker; Man, the perceiver—always thinking, continually acting.

—R.C.

THE GODLIKE IAMBLICHUS

[This extract from D. S. Merezhkovsky's historical novel, *The Death of the Gods,* in which the Emperor Julian, called "the Apostate," is the central figure, appeared in the *Theosophical Forum* for September, 1899. The translation is by Charles Johnston. In this work Merezhkovsky has, it seems, risen above himself and the ordinary level of modern fiction, and succeeded in evoking something of the true spirit of a teacher of occult philosophy. Theosophists will appreciate the paradox he illuminates. The abyss between head-learning and heart-wisdom, between the Eye and the Heart Doctrine, will always prevent the Initiate from communicating the principles of *knowledge* to those who still desire only information. Iamblichus had the power to appear as nothing in the eyes of men, because his life was of a different order, on another plane. But it is evident that he was not cut off from Julian, who *rose* to that plane, and who later became an initiate himself. It may be of interest for students to turn from Merezhkovsky's study to another account of the mission of Iamblichus, in the "Great Theosophists" series, THEOSOPHY XXV, 149.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

IN the cities of Asia Minor, Nicomedia, Pergamos, Smyrna, whither nineteen-year-old Julian had wandered in search of Grecian wisdom, he had heard of the famous theurgist and sophist, Iamblichus of Chalcidice, the pupil of the Neoplatonist Porphyry—the godlike Iamblichus, as all men called him.

Julian went to him in Ephesus.

Iamblichus was an old man, small, lean, wrinkled.

He loved to complain of his illnesses, his gout, his rheumatism, his headaches. He abused the doctors, but carefully followed their treatment. He took great delight in talking about poultices, infusions, medicines and plasters. He went about in a soft lined tunic, even in summer, and could never keep warm. He was as fond of the sun as a lizard.

From his early youth, Iamblichus had abstained from eating flesh, and spoke of it with sincere disgust. He could not understand how people could eat anything that had had life. His maid-servant prepared him a special kind of barley porridge, a little warm wine, and honey. Even the bread the old man could not masticate with his toothless gums.

Around him were gathered a great crowd of pupils, full of respect and adoration for him, from Rome, Antioch, Carthage, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Persia. All believed that Iamblichus worked miracles. He treated them like a father, who was weary of having so many little, helpless children. When they began to dispute or quarrel, the teacher waved his hand with a grimace of physical pain. He spoke in a gentle, pleasant voice, and the higher rose the voices of the disputants, the more gently spoke Iamblichus. He could not endure noise, and hated loud voices and creaking sandals.

Julian, greatly disappointed, looked with perplexity at the capricious, shivering, sick old man, unable to see what power could attract people to him.

He remembered that it was said that his pupils had seen him once, at night, at the hour of prayer, raised by a miraculous force ten cubits above the ground, and surrounded with an aureole of golden radiance. And there was another story of how the teacher, in the Syrian town of Gadara, had evoked from the two springs of Eros and Anteros, a joyful genius of love, with fair curls, and a dark, sorrowful spirit. Both nestled up to Iamblichus, like children, and vanished again at a wave of his hand.

Julian listened to the words of the teacher, but could find no power in them. The metaphysics of the school of Porphyry seemed to him dry, dead, and terribly complicated. Iamblichus seemed to be playing at overcoming dialectic difficulties on contested points. In his teaching of God, of the world, of Ideas, of the Triad of Plotinus, there was deep book-knowledge—and not a spark of life. Julian had expected something different.

Nevertheless, he waited, and did not go away.

Iamblichus had strange, green eyes, which showed even more distinctly against his dusky, wrinkled skin. Sometimes the evening sky has this greenish color, when seen between dark clouds, before a storm. It seemed to Julian that in those eyes, which were not human, and still less divine, there gleamed that occult, higher, serpentlike wisdom, of which Iamblichus uttered not a word to his disciples. But suddenly, in a tired, low voice, the godlike teacher asked why his porridge or poultices were not ready, or complained of his gout, and Julian's reverence vanished.

Once he was walking with Julian outside the city, on the sea-shore. It was a soft, sad evening. Far off, over the harbor of Panormos, gleamed the white terraces of the famous temple of Diana of the Ephesians, crowned with statues. On the sandy shore of Cayster—it was here, according to tradition, that Latona gave birth to Apollo and Diana—the thin, dark reeds were motionless. The smoke of innumerable altars from the sacred grove of Ortygia rose in straight columns to the sky. To the south, the mountains of Samos shone white. The beating of the breakers was soft as the breath of a sleeping child. Transparent waves broke over the smooth, black sand. There was a smell of the salt water warmed by the sun, and of seaweed. The setting sun was hidden behind the clouds, gilding their piled-up masses.

Iamblichus sat down on a stone, and Julian reclined at his feet. The teacher stroked Julian's stiff, black hair:

"You are sad?"

"Yes!"

"I know, I know. You are seeking, but not finding. You have not the strength to say, 'He is,' and you have not the courage to say 'He is not'."

"How did you guess, teacher?"

"Poor boy! I have been suffering from the same malady for fifty years. And I shall suffer, to the day of my death. Do you think I know Him more than you do? These are perpetual birth-pains. In comparison with them, all other pains are as nothing. People think that they suffer from hunger or thirst or pain or poverty. In reality they suffer only from the thought that perhaps He is not. This is the only suffering in the world. Who dares to say 'He is not'? and who knows what superhuman power is needed to say 'He is'?"

"And you, even you have never drawn near to Him?"

"Thrice in my life I experienced the ecstasy, the full absorption into Him. Plotinus experienced it four times. Porphyry, five. There were three moments in my life for the sake of which it was worth while to live."

"I asked your pupils about this. They knew nothing."

"Do they dare to know? The husks of wisdom are enough for them. For almost all men, the kernel is deadly."

"Let me die, teacher! But give it to me!"

"You dare?"

"I dare! Tell me! tell me!"

"What can I tell you? I know not how. And is it right to speak of it? Listen to the stillness of the evening. It will tell you the secret better than any words."

And he stroked Julian's head as before, as though he had been a child. The pupil thought: "This is it! this is what I was waiting for!" He clasped Iamblichus' knees, looked up entreatingly into his eyes, and said:

"Teacher, have pity! Reveal all. Do not desert me."

Iamblichus spoke low, as if to himself, as if he neither heard nor saw his pupil. His strangely unmoving, green eyes were fixed on the clouds, inwardly gilded by the sun.

"Yes, yes, we have all forgotten the Father's voice. Like children separated from the Father from our cradles, we hear it, and do not recognize it. There must be perfect silence in the soul, a ceasing of all earthly and heavenly voices. Then may we hear His voice. While the reason shines, and like a noonday sun illumines the soul, we remain in ourselves, and behold not God. But when the reason draws near to its setting, an ecstasy comes over the soul, like the dew of evening. The wicked cannot feel that ecstasy. Only the wise man becomes a lyre, which trembles and resounds under the hand of God. Whence comes the light that illumines the soul? I know not. It comes stealthily, when you do not expect it. It cannot be sought out. God is not far from us. We must prepare ourselves. We must be full of quietness, and wait, as the eyes wait, for the rising of the sun that uplifts his light, in the words of the poet, from the dark ocean. God neither comes nor goes. He only manifests himself. And then He is the opposite of the world, the opposite of all that is. He is nothing. He is All."

Iamblichus rose from the stone, and slowly spread his lean weak hands.

"Be still, be still—I say unto you—be still! Hearken unto Him. He is here. Let the earth and the sea be silent, and the air, and even the heavens! Hearken! He who fills the universe, piercing the

atoms with His breath, and illumining matter—Chaos, 'that makes the gods to fear'—as the evening sun gilds that dark cloud."

Julian listened, and it seemed to him that the teacher's voice, weak and low, filled the world, reaching even to the very heavens, to the utmost limits of the deep. But Julian's sadness was so great that it escaped from his breast in an involuntary sigh:

"My father, forgive me, but if it be so, to what end is life? why this eternal alternation of life and death? why are there sufferings? why is there evil? why is there a body? why are there doubts? why is there a longing after the impossible?"

Iamblichus shuddered slightly, laid his hand on Julian's hair once more, and answered:

"That is where the mystery lies, my son. There is neither evil, nor the body, nor the world, if He is. Either He, or the world. It seems to us that there is evil, that there is the body, that there is the world. This is but an illusion—a cheat of life. Remember—all have one soul, all men, and even inarticulate things. There was a time when we all rested together in the bosom of the Father, in the everlasting night. But once more we looked from above, into the darkness, the material world, and each saw in it his own image, as in a mirror. And the soul said to itself: 'I can and will be free! I am as He is. Can I not dare to separate myself from him, and become the All?' The soul, like Narcissus in the stream, was taken captive by the beauty of its own image, mirrored in the body. And then it fell; it wished to fall to the end, to separate itself from God forever—and could not. The feet of a mortal touch the earth; his brow is higher than the summit of heaven. And so by the everlasting ladder of birth and death, souls, all beings, rise to Him, and descend from Him. They try to depart from the Father, and cannot. Every soul wishes to be a god, but in vain: it longs for the bosom of the Father, and finds no rest on earth, thirsting to return to the One. We must return to Him, then all will be God, and God will be all. Are you the only one who longs for Him? See what a heavenly sadness there is in the stillness of nature. Listen! Can you not feel that all things are longing for Him?"

The sun set. The golden, incandescent clouds grew cold. The sea became pale and ethereal as the sky. The sky, as blue and clear as the sea. Along the road a wagon rumbled. In it sat a youth and a

woman—two lovers, perhaps. The woman's voice sang a sad, familiar love-song. Afterwards all once more became silent, and still sadder. The swift, southern night descended from the heavens. Julian murmured:

"How often I have wondered why nature is so sad. The more beautiful, the sadder it is."

Iamblichus replied with a smile:

"Yes, yes! nature would fain say what she is grieving for, but cannot. She is dumb. She sleeps, and tries to remember God in her slumber, through the veil of her dream, but cannot, because of the burden of matter. She conceives God dimly and dreamily. All worlds, all stars, and the sea, and the earth, and living things, and trees, and people—all are nature's dreams of God. What she conceives, is born and dies. She creates by conceiving only, as happens in dreams; creates easily, knowing neither effort nor obstacle. That is why the waves of her creation are so beautiful, so purposeless, so divine. Nature plays at seeing visions—it is like the sport of the clouds. Without beginning, it is without end. Beyond conceiving, there is nothing in the universe. The deeper it is, the quieter. Will, struggle, action, are only weak, incomplete, or clouded dreams of God. Nature, in her mighty inactivity, creates forms, like Geometry. What she sees, exists. She pours forth form after form, from her maternal bosom. But her dim and silent conception is only the image of another, and a brighter one. Nature seeks the word, and finds it not. Nature is the sleeping mother Cybele, with eyes perpetually closed. Man alone has discovered the word which nature sought, and found not. The soul of man is nature, opening her sleeping lids, awakening, and ready to behold God—no longer in a dream, but openly—face to face."

The first stars shone out on the darkening and deepening sky. Now and again they faded, only to flash up again once more. They seemed to rotate, like great diamonds strung to the firmament. New stars kept lighting up, and ever new ones. Iamblichus pointed to them:

"To what shall I liken the world—all these suns and stars? I shall liken them to a net, cast by the fisherman into the sea. The net moves, but cannot stop the water, and the universe tries to lay hold on God, but cannot. The net moves, but God is still, as the limitless ocean, in which the net is cast. If the universe did not

move, God would have created nothing, would not have moved from his repose; for why and what should He strive after? There in the kingdom of the eternal Mothers, in the bosom of the Universal Spirit, lie the seeds, the Idea-forms, of all that has been, and shall be—the Logos lies hidden, the germ of the cricket, of a blade of grass, and side by side with them, the germ of the Olympian God."

Then Julian cried aloud, and his voice sounded on the evening stillness like a cry of mortal pain:

"But who is He? Who is He? Why does He not answer when we cry to Him? What is His name? I would know Him, see and hear Him. Why does He evade my thoughts? Where is He?"

"Poor child—what means thought before Him? He has no name. He is of such nature that we can only say what He cannot be, and never what He is. But you cannot suffer without praising Him; you cannot love without praising Him; you cannot curse without praising Him. Creating all, He himself is nought of what He has created. When you say 'He is not,' you offer Him not less praise than when you say 'He is.' Nought can be affirmed of Him; neither existence, nor being, nor life; because He is above all existence, higher than all being, beyond all life. That is why I said He is the negation of the world, the negation of your thought. Turn away from the existent, from all that is; and there, in the abyss of the abyss, the depths of unspeakable darkness, like to the light, thou shalt find Him. Give up for Him friends and kin and land, heaven and earth, and thyself and thy reason. Then thou shalt no longer see the light, for thou shalt be the light. Thou wilt no longer say: 'He and I'; thou wilt feel that He and thou art one; and thy soul will mock at thine own body, as at a mirage. Then—the silence, and no more words at all. And if the world, at that very moment, should fall into ruins, thou wilt rejoice, for what is the world to thee who are one with Him? Thy soul will desire no more, for He is above life; it will not think, because He is higher than thought. Thought is a searching for the light, but He seeks not the light, because He is the Light. He penetrates thy soul utterly, and re-creates it into Himself. And then above passion and alone, it rests above reason; higher than the righteous, higher than the realm of Ideas, higher than beauty, in the abyss, in the bosom of the Father of Lights. The soul becomes God, or to speak more truly, it understands at last that throughout the

eternities, it was, and is, and shall be God. . . . Such, my son, is the life of the Olympians, such is the life of godlike men and sages. A renunciation of all that is in the world, a contempt for the passions of earth, the flight of the soul to Him whom it beholds face to face."

He was silent, and Julian fell at his feet, not daring to touch him, and only kissed the earth which the feet of the holy man had touched. Then the pupil raised his face, and gazed into those strange green eyes, in which shone the unveiled secret of the Serpent's wisdom. They seemed quiet, and deeper than the sky; within them seemed to flow a magical power. Julian whispered:

"Teacher, you can do all things. I believe! Command the mountains, and the mountains will move! Be like Him! Work a miracle! Accomplish the impossible; pity me; I believe!"

"My poor child, what do you ask of me? Is not the miracle which may be accomplished in your soul greater than any miracle that I can work? My child, is not that miracle more terrible and divine, that power in whose name you dare to say: 'He is,' and if He is not, all the same 'He shall be.' And you say: 'So shall He be; I will it so!' "

"The Mysterious Path"

When the self-evolving ascetic—whether in, or outside the active world—has placed himself, according to his natural capacity, above, hence made himself master of, his (1) *Sarira*—body; (2) *Indriya*—senses; (3) *Dosha*—faults; (4) *Dukkha*—pain; and is ready to become one with his *Manas*—mind; *Buddhi*—intellection, or spiritual intelligence; and *Atma*—highest soul, *i.e.,* spirit. When he is ready for this, and, further, to recognize in *Atma* the highest ruler in the world of perceptions, and in the will, the highest executive energy (power), then may he, under the time-honored rules, be taken in hand by one of the Initiates. He may then be shown the mysterious path at whose thither end the Chela is taught the unerring discernment of *Phala,* or the fruits of causes produced, and given the means of reaching *Apavarga*—emancipation from the misery of repeated births. —H.P.B.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS AT HOME

PAUL, Madge and Chris shared the living-room. Dinner was long over, and Mother and Dad had gone out visiting, leaving the young folks to keep the home fires, if not burning, at least in a comfortable glow. It was at quiet times like this that Madge found herself closest to understanding what a family meant, and, missing both Mother and Dad this evening, she fell to musing. As a family, they were pretty lucky, she reflected. Or was it luck? Where did their sense of unity come from? Looking over at Chris and Paul, she wondered if they shared her feeling of ease and content. Echoes from an education course she was taking brought images of other parents to her mind, and presently an imp of mischief led her to set the scene with a good-humored caricature.

"I don't know what's gotten into those children," she began plaintively. "Gone tonight, *again*—that's the third time this week. Why, their friends must think they have no home at all—sometimes I wonder myself. Seems as if we hardly ever see them any more." Here Madge clucked nervously, in perfect imitation of the "possessive" parent.

"Now, now, Mother, they're young, remember. . . ." This from Chris, who stepped nimbly into the role of the indulgent father. "And after all," he added, sententiously, "boys will be boys, you know!"

"But surely not forever!" exclaimed "Mother," tartly, while Madge peered from behind the maternal mask with a completely out-of-character gleam in her eye before reassuming her studied frown. "Someday they'll have to take responsibility and settle down to real *work.*"

"Ah, well," sighed Chris, dramatically, "Youth must have its fling!" With this, he turned to rout out Paul, who had not yet put aside his book, though he had kept one ear on the exchange.

"Isn't it so, Grandpa?" queried Chris, assigning his brother, with dubious flattery, to a place among the honored ancients.

"Hmmm," replied "Grandpa" non-committally, and, wrinkling his brow, burrowed deeper into his pocket of thought. "You're both right, of course. Boys will be boys, and someday they'll be men."

"All the more reason why they should have fun while they can," declared "Father," adding in a sorrow-laden voice, "—it'll be soon enough that they'll grow up and have troubles."

"That's just the point!" returned "Mother," triumphantly. "A proper sense of duty toward their parents would keep them *out* of trouble. You can't expect children to know what's right and good for them. That's what parents are for—to guide young minds into the proper channels." Madge was doing a thorough job on the "benevolent despot." Fixing easy-going "Father" with a reproving glance, she settled back in a glow of self-righteous dedication. "It hasn't been easy all these years, finding money to put them through school, seeing that they developed the right interests and made the right kind of friends. We have a right to expect something in return!"

"Eh?" queried "Grandpa" sharply, "what's that? What do you mean, 'you have a right to expect something in return'?"

"Why, of course we do!" replied "Mother," innocently. Madge couldn't help smiling conspiratorially at Paul as she led "Mother" straight into the trap. "We're not asking for love or gratitude for *ourselves,* of course. But the children can show that they appreciate our sacrifices by making the right use of their opportunities —and that's where our knowledge of right and wrong comes in. We have to see that they make the right decisions from the beginning. After all, a mistake made in youth can ruin a man's whole life."

"And so can a mistake made in the way you try to educate a youth," retorted "Grandpa," grimly.

"Mother" would undoubtedly have continued with more along this line, but Chris could no longer support his solemnity. In a moment, all three were laughing together over the strange problems incident to bringing up children—and parents.

"You know," said Paul, as he regained a degree of composure, "that's one value of Theosophy—it's a basis for *co-operation* between parents and children. It used to be the idea that parents knew best just because they were parents, and children had to regard them more or less as God's right hand in the family. At that," he added, thoughtfully, "I guess there still are some home-style Jehovahs left —people who think it's a mark of favor instead of an intrusion to dictate a pattern for their children."

"Still, dictators are a little out of fashion now," Madge observed. "This is the age of the Young Rebel, remember? The problem isn't the irrational imposition of restraints, but the equally irrational repudiation of all restraint."

"Mmmm! What nice big words!" exclaimed Chris with wide-open, wondering eyes turned on Madge, who reddened self-consciously. "Let me step it down for you," he added, teasingly. "Nowadays, Papa isn't considered right simply because he's Papa. He's more likely to be considered *wrong* for the very same reason."

"Anyway," concluded Madge defensively, "no matter how you look at it, parents are on one level and children on another, and by switching them around and putting children on top and parents underneath, you don't bring them any closer together."

"Well, that's what I meant about Theosophy and co-operation," Paul persisted. "It isn't a question of levels, at all. There's just one level, really—there are only *souls*. And since the aim of all souls is ultimately the same, the purpose of a family goes beyond itself. The parent upholds the child's integrity and the child can avail himself of the parent's experience without jeopardizing that integrity, because both are facing in the same direction. Free companionship—isn't that what co-operation means?"

"That's quite a contrast to the usual idea," suggested Madge, thoughtfully, "For many people, a child is like a blank sheet of paper that parents have to fill up with a list of do's and don't's and specific directions. They don't think there is such a thing as an old soul in a new body."

"Oh, that's the whole trouble!" exclaimed Chris, sweepingly. "We're always thinking in terms of beginnings and endings, instead of *continuings*. People talk about 'living on in lives of their children.' I bet it would make quite a difference if they had the idea that they lived on—with or without their children!"

"Perhaps that is the trouble," remarked Paul. "The parents may think they are sacrificing themselves. They stop living, in a way, and expect their children to take up where they left off. Actually, it's the children who are sacrificed—they become vicarious atoners for the aspirations the parents have given up."

"Sacrifice isn't inertia," Chris added, "We have to keep *moving*, and it's easier when we're moving together."

INTUITIVE PERCEPTION

THE beginning of all knowledge is intuitive. Intuitive awakening must precede all progress of enduring value, for it marks the outline and sets the limits of possible attainment. That alone is knowledge which we have gained intuitively, not what we hold as a result of argument or reasoning. The faculty of reason was never intended by nature to be the creator of knowledge. Knowledge *is*, and has always existed. It is the whole body of unchanging universal principles, known by some beings from all eternity, and it reaches the mind in the first instance through intuition. The function of reason is to adapt those principles to the particular problems of daily life.

The purpose of all true teaching should be to arouse intuition, to awaken to activity that center in man which knows. Some students of Theosophy, unable to free themselves from Aristotelian methods, have been known to complain that the teachings of the Wisdom Religion are incomplete. "Theosophical doctrines," they say, "give one the *feeling* they are true, but they leave him high and dry. They fail to square with accepted bases of reasoning," And so, the *feeling* in most cases is ignored. Because we cannot at once translate intuitive perception into earthly wisdom, or make our heart understanding agree with false mental concepts, the whole is denounced. Such seekers after knowledge seldom realize the necessity for questioning their own minds, for probing to the bottom all accepted and unproved theories.

The ancient method of thought and study was opposite to that which is used in the world today. The ancients began with universal principles, with the highest they could grasp or envisage. First lessons were always in terms of Fundamental Propositions, whose appeal was to the intuition. With universals in mind, the pupil proceeded to a study of details. This descent into particulars, however, was not intended to increase his actual knowledge. It served only to confirm the original perception, to fill in the structure and to solidify. Descent into particulars makes practical and usable the knowledge of principles already held.

Or, to express the idea in terms of the *Secret Doctrine*: the original perception is *Buddhic,* the innate feeling that "this is true." But *Buddhi,* we are told, cannot operate on this plane except through *Manas.* Hence, the necessity for descent from universals to particulars, for formulation in the mind of right ideas. *Manasic* perception provides the focus through which *Buddhic* wisdom may operate, through which the intuitive knowledge of the soul may be used practically for the good of mankind.

The quota of true knowledge possessed by any man, therefore, must be measured in terms of his intuitive perception of universal principles, and his Will to act ever on that basis. It is not possible to rise in wisdom or usefulness above such perception. As intuition grows, so grows the soul in true service of the race.

OUTLOOK UPON ACTION

Man's intuition carries with it all the knowledge existing in his real nature. Man has lived lives anterior to this one, not few but many—even on a planet which we inhabited before this earth began, or, rather, before we began with this earth. The many, many experiences gained through many, many lives are still with us. We have never lost them. They are still resident and potentially active in our innermost being—in that real nature of ours which each one of us reaches every twenty-four hours, when the body is asleep, when the dreaming state is passed. There lies intuition—the sum total of all our past experiences. Something comes through occasionally, giving us an inkling of what is the true nature. The voice of the conscience is the outlook of that true nature upon the action which is contemplated. Some people hearing that "voice of the silence" think God is speaking to them, or that some other outside being impresses them. But, in reality, it came from their own inner nature—was born from and drawn from the accumulation of all past wisdom; it was "the voice" of their own spiritual nature.

—R.C.

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

On Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms

APHORISM 28 *(Book III): "By concentrating his mind upon the moon, there arises in the ascetic a knowledge of the fixed stars." How is this to be explained? In S.D.* II, 701, *it is said that "even great adepts, trained seers though they are, can claim acquaintance with the nature and appearance of planets and their inhabitants belonging to our solar system only."*

In the passage from the *Secret Doctrine* cited by the questioner, it is very plainly indicated that we are to regard the matter of "fixed stars" from the viewpoint of archaic as well as modern science. Our sun, however slowly, revolves around a fixed point in the Milky Way. It would appear, then, that Aphorism 29 gives a clue to Aphorism 28, by pointing us to the law of cycles, and stating that by concentration of the mind upon the polar star, the ascetic is able to know the *fixed time* and *motion* of every star in the universe. Since no atom in the universe is without life and consciousness and motion, and man's principles are allied to the planets of our solar-system—their atoms and molecules in constant circulation—and since the ascetic *can* know of the spheres between the earth and sun (Aphorism 27), then, it must be that he can know, analogically, the rate of motion of our sun. The moon is not only the nearest geographical point of reference for the ascetic, but has also the strongest astral connection with our earth, of all the planets.

That the sun and moon are the deities of our planetary macrocosmos, (*S.D.* II, 639 fn) is a clue to the intelligences using those mediums of expression, or motions. The *Secret Doctrine* statement quoted in the question also indicates quite another matter for our consideration, namely that the *nature* of the planets and their "inhabitants" *outside* our solar-system can not be thoroughly known even to high adepts, who can have access, even in spirit, only to the planes of consciousness *within* our solar system. The work of the highest adept is, after all, work in the context of a particular or historical cycle. Their activity requires specific knowledge of the evolutionary status of beings involved in our solar system, while like knowledge of the beings in other solar systems is unnecessary.

(a) Aphorism 33: "By concentrating his mind upon the light in the head the ascetic acquires the power of seeing divine beings." The note says that "the seeing of divine beings can be accomplished by concentrating upon that part of the body more nearly connected with them." But I would think that divine beings could be contacted only through one's own divine nature—not through the BODY.

There is no form, however divine, which cannot be perceived *through the medium* of the body. In this instance, the head is said to collect some of "the luminous principle in nature," and becomes an appropriate means or instrument for the faculty in question. The body thus serves to condense the more highly refined matter which is the substratum of such visions. As intimated by Aphorism 33, this variety of substance is not an integral part of the physical organism. Yet it is *connected* with the more gross form of the brain. The highest powers come into use with the blending of the essences of all planes. Every being has, by definition, a Form, and this form can be perceived by the faculty of the *total* human organism which corresponds to the matter and qualities of appearance on that particular plane. There are "lives," for instance, of differing development informing every one of the physical organs of man's body, and each class of intelligence has a distinctive rapport with all life of that class and degree. The "Elementals" of Theosophical parlance are all "divine beings," whether presently embodied or disembodied. The four lower principles of the seven-principled man serve as connecting links for the mind-soul in learning how to understand and finally to utilize the elemental forces of all nature.

(b) Then turn to Aphorism 52: Why should one want to see divine beings, if it means to renew the afflictions of the mind? Aphorism 52 suggests a very different point of view from Aphorism 33.

Aphorism 38 described the nature of the "affliction" of the mind which Aphorism 52 suggests may flow from association with celestial beings: "The powers hereinbefore described are liable to become obstacles in the way of perfect concentration, because of the possibility of wonder and pleasure from their exercise, *but are not obstacles for the ascetic who is perfect in the practice enjoined.*" It is then necessary to contrast "association" with "seeing," since the vision mentioned in Aphorism 33 could mean simply a clear *per-*

ception that a divine luminousness exists in varying degrees with varying beings, yet to attempt definite contact or association might well be a mixing of karma and lead to the type of psychological confusion described.

Aphorism 39: "The inner self of the ascetic may be transferred to any other body and there have complete control." Is this the rationale of the "borrowed body," or does it simply mean the identifying of the ascetic's mind with the mind of another—or both?

This Aphorism illustrates amply what Mr. Judge meant on page xi, Preface, by saying that Patanjali had no need to enforce the doctrine of reincarnation, and that it is assumed all through the Aphorisms. Here, we find the intimation that the ascetic consciously and voluntarily enters body after body, and assumes control in each one, because in preceding bodies that inner self had gained philosophical knowledge as well as the power to control bodily and sensory operations. All men use "borrowed bodies," since all bodies are made up of terrestrial and chemical elements which are returned after the death of the body; but, the ascetic "borrows" in full knowledge of the process. The inner self does not attach itself to a "foreign" mind and body—that is, to a body not belonging to it under Karma.

It seems as if the questioner is considering the possibility of the ascetic controlling the will and choice of *other* minds. Such control would be utterly contrary to the science of Raja Yoga. All that may be done is to intensify the spiritual force of another mind, at that other's wish and desire. It may be done by a sort of spiritual osmosis, or participation in the spiritual or luminous essence of the true adept. The case of "borrowed bodies" in a specific sense, when a body must be deserted by its inmate, and is taken over by one who knows how to do so, and who can use it for the benefit of mankind, follows the same occult law. There must be some karmic relationship between the one who is through with a particular body, and the one who is able to revivify it for a high purpose.

Aphorism 42: (a) "By concentrating his mind upon the relations between the ear and AKASA, *the ascetic acquires the power of hearing all sounds, whether upon the earth or in the aether, and whether far or near." How relate this to Aphorism 17?*

This Aphorism simply chooses another suggestive way of saying that all powers and faculties in the universe are related to man's sevenfold organism. Here again an understanding of the Aphorism demands recognition of the fundamental occult fact that *no knowledge is possible on any plane without a grasp of the principles which apply on all planes.* Akasa is the universal principle corresponding to Sound, and once the ascetic can attune the physical organ of sound with the true medium of its transmission—the Akasa—no sound in the visible or invisible worlds would be beyond his power to hear. Aphorism 17 discusses the "power of understanding the meaning of any sound uttered by any sentient being." This might be regarded as the object to be held in view in the practice of Aphorism 42, for unless a power is used to extend understanding, it does not become part of the soul, and therefore is lost at death.

(b) Science considers that sound is transmitted through material mediums, as earth, water, air; that each liquid and solid has a characteristic rate of sound transmission, and gases have a range of rates depending on their pressure; but in a void or vacuum there is no transmission of sound. What, then, is the basis of the note, saying that Sound is the distinctive property of aether, when physical vacuums do not affect the aether, but do affect physical sound?

It is a fundamental postulate of occultism that no absolute vacuum exists. A given area in space may be denuded of all those properties which act as known transmitting agents for the vibration of sound, while within that relative vacuum there are still forms of life and substance through which sound can be transmitted. It is necessary to recognize this principle, since, actually, for science as for occultism, there can be no break in the organic continuity of nature forces, even though such forces go through numerous transformations. A corollary from the science of today is suggested in the present investigation of supersonic waves and of innumerable sounds which cannot be recorded by the physical ear. From this it would follow most naturally that there are still other agencies of sound which as yet have not been represented by mathematical equation, nor given a place in the formulation of scientific theory.

ON THE LOOKOUT

"A Free and Responsible Press"

Under the title, *A Free and Responsible Press,* the Commission on Freedom of the Press has published its report on the aims, activities, and achievements of the agencies of mass communication, including newspapers, radio, motion pictures, news-gathering media, magazines and books. The twelve members of the Commission were selected by Robert Hutchins, Chairman, and included Zechariah Chafee, William E. Hocking, Charles E. Merriam, Reinhold Niebuhr, George N. Shuster and Archibald MacLeish—all men of distinction in the fields of literature and education. As Dr. Hutchins writes in a foreword to the Report, "The Commission's recommendations are not startling. The most surprising thing about them is that nothing more surprising could be proposed." But the Report is rewarding for its clarity of exposition and analysis, and its statement of principle is practical philosophy of a high order. Published in book form (139 pages) by the Chicago University Press, the Report ably surveys a field which is of strategic importance in war or peace—the field of communications.

"Faster and Farther"

The dual nature of the modern agencies of mass communication—press and radio—is first considered:

> These agencies can facilitate thought and discussion. They can stifle it. They can advance the progress of civilization or they can thwart it. They can debase and vulgarize mankind. They can endanger the peace of the world; they can do so accidentally, in a fit of absence of mind. They can play up or down the news and its significance, foster and feed emotions, create complacent fictions and blind spots, misuse the great words, and uphold empty slogans. Their scope and power are increasing every day as new instruments become available to them. These instruments can spread lies faster and farther than our forefathers dreamed when they enshrined the freedom of the press in the First Amendment to our Constitution.

Our forefathers may have anticipated the need for protecting the press from government control, but it is now evident that as a result of what the Commission calls the *communications revolution*—

the tremendous expansion of mass media—the press has to be protected from itself. The press—and every person—is entitled to freedom to express ideas. But does this include a license to practice mass hypnosis?

With typical thoroughness, the Report takes pains to define the hazards as well as the immunities of free speech: "In any actual society free speech will require courage. And the first danger to free expression will always be the danger at the source, the timidity of the issuer or his purchasability." These weaknesses are fully exploited by those with a taste for managing public opinion. The mass media are manipulated to condition an audience at the expense of free thought.

"Political Action"

The Report, however, is chiefly a statement of principle, and needs cogent application before it can reach the people where they read. The philosophy of free speech is the necessity for independent thinking, but one may "accept" this generalization without realizing, or altering in the least, his own timidity and purchasability. There is a place, then, for another kind of criticism, which may be illustrated by the work of Herbert Marshall McLuhan in the Spring issue of *View,* a "little magazine" published in New York. Mr. McLuhan, who teaches at Assumption College, Windsor, Canada, enters upon a specific and caustic analysis of the techniques employed by the Luce publication system. His thesis may be represented by one sentence, "Nobody will find either human dimensions, human order, or human complexity in *Time, Life,* or *Fortune.*" But his development of the idea is deliberately detailed:

> On one hand they [*T.L.F.*] affect the role of spectators of events. And they make no bones about being omniscient and alert spectators of the march of time. But on the other hand they are always recommending their own spectator role and penny arcade vision to millions of readers. Vigorously thrusting an emotionally-charged spectator role on their readers by every device of popularized snob-appeal and the big stick of scientific know-how is surely taking political initiative. Basically, therefore, the Luce triumvirate is carefully engineered political action. Sub-doctrinaire and sub-rational action, it's true. But still much the strongest and most definite political action to be discerned in England or America.

> *Time, Life,* and *Fortune* represent three levels of irresponsible politics in much the same sense as Hollywood is willy-nilly a political force. That is, neither *T.L.F.* nor Hollywood attempts to hold up any kind of object or program for detached observation or appraisal. But both arrange their exhibits in suchwise as to manipulate the standardized reflexes of a semi-hypnotized and mentally helpless audience. . . . It isn't the worth or character of the image or statement presented which is of any political significance but the effect which it is observed to have on a sharply focussed reader. Needless to say, the reader is not the one to do the focussing. He is held in position.

A Psychology That Pays

This picture may appear to be overdrawn, yet, if "political force" is defined as any influence which unites a group or mass of people by any means—for any end—McLuhan's remarks are based on facts: *Life,* with a circulation of over 4½ million, has doubled its popularity in the last seven years. *Time* approaches the circulation of the top group of magazines with 1½ million readers. This answers the numerical requirements for a significant political machine. The psychological requirements are not far to seek. It matters little whether these publications are bent on some particular political or religious ends of their own (Lookout last month discussed the God-idea as it emerges in *Life* Magazine). Actually, few magazines or newspapers can be free from specific editorial bias, nor is it necessary that they should be. But it matters greatly that these magazines—typical rather than unique offenders in this regard—are, by a policy of facile debunking, gradually reducing the American people to a state of mental numbness, and crystallizing their minds at a dead level of adolescent pseudo-sophistication. With a public "sharply focussed" in this position, and its reflexes carefully calculated by technicians of the man-machine, what more is needed to create any sort of political action, particularly of a semi-rational order?

The Omnipotent Adjective

The average reader is the victim of a skillfully directed stream of high-powered, split-second prose, timed so that the reader can understand it verbally, but too fast for him to think as he reads. This prevents the reader from following the argument himself and then drawing independent conclusions. Instead, stereotyped judg-

ments are instilled in the reader's mind *in the process of reading*. Coupled with the high-tempo treatment, the injection of a seemingly casual adjective here and there gives a strong unconscious bias—and the set of the reader's mind is securely fixed. McLuhan quotes and comments on an illustration from *Time:*

> "Mr. Byrnes, just before flying eastward in the *Sacred Cow*, said hopefully: 'Peace must come from the hearts of men'." That is the concluding item in the survey of "The Nation." Apart from the gratuitous mention of the ludicrous *Sacred Cow*, the *Time* word in this is "hopefully." Byrnes was probably grim rather than hopeful. But "hopefully" is the true *Time* clack, giving a hefty tweak to the noses of Byrnes and the dozing public for the bright *Time* reader. All *Time* reporting is heavily loaded with superfluous emotion in this way. But most of the loading is done by juxtaposition of items, pseudo-honorifics, counterpointed inscriptions, and salience of rampant adjectives.

THE GENTLE DEBUNKERS

"Debunking" has in recent years become a fruitful source of revenue to writers, as it has always been a source of power to politicians. Biographies which allegedly make their subjects more "human," or "closer to our time"—at the expense of truth and character alike—are written and succeed on the *Time*-honoured principle that the subtlest flattery of the masses is to reduce all men to their level. On the hypothesis that democracy means complete equality, any exceptional talent is no more than an undemocratic mask, which it is a democratic duty to expose. McLuhan points out, for example, that by sending Life to a party each week, the editors give—

> the dream-fast readers . . . a share in the exotic fooleries of their economic superiors. Thus does *Life* draw the teeth of democratic envy of the rich by representing the rich as unbelievably moronic. And *Time* achieves the same end on a different level by its nihilistic stereotype.

THE MASS MACHINE

It is a fallacy of "democracy" that legal equality somehow includes such intrinsic qualities as pertain to character, morality, intelligence, talent, and so on. This concept underlies our present system of education—the production of mass mediocrity, the lower-

ing of standards so that all who wish to spend the time may acquire college degrees without changing to any perceptible extent the general teen-age mentality level of the country. Further standardization, in line with the most modern assembly-line techniques, proceeds under the direction of the press, radio, and movie industries, intent on providing Americans with thoughtless and profitless entertainment in all their leisure hours.

"The Untrancing of Millions"

Instructed in confusion, and bound with the chains of cunningly-contrived ridicule for all who have either talents or convictions, the American people are forgetting how to think. McLuhan's recommendations, though perhaps far-fetched, are nevertheless suggestive:

> The process of renewal can't come from above. It can only take the form of reawakened critical faculties. The untrancing of millions of individuals by millions of individual acts of the will. Psychological decentralization. A merely provisional image of how it might (not how it should) occur could be formed by supposing every mechanical agency of communication in the world to be suspended for six months. No press. No radio. No movies. Just people finding out who lived near them. Forming small communities within big cities. It would be agony. All psychological drugs cut off. No capsulated thoughts or melodies. To say that anything like this could never happen, or that it should never be allowed to happen is a remark worthy of those mesmerized practical men who are efficiently arranging for the obsequies of our world's mind and body alike.

Good Practice—Good Business

From McLuhan's analysis and conclusion, we may return to the report on *A Free and Responsible Press,* which contributes a correlative suggestion:

> The press must know that its faults and errors have ceased to be private vagaries and have become public dangers. Its inadequacies menace the balance of public opinion. It has lost the common and ancient human liberty to be deficient in its function or to offer half-truth for the whole. The situation approaches a dilemma. The press must remain private and free, *ergo* human and fallible; but the press dare no longer indulge in fallibility—it must supply the public need. Here, again, there is no perfect solution.

The Commission on Freedom of the Press engages in some de bunking of its own, and directs a few second thoughts at a com mon superstition:

> It has been said that, if the press is to continue as a private business, it can succeed only as other retailers succeed, that is, by giving the customers what they want. On this theory the test of public service is financial success. . . . On this theory, if the press tries to rise higher than the interests and tastes of the mass audience as they are revealed at the newsstands or at the box office, it will be driven into bankruptcy, and its existence as a private business will be at an end. We have weighed the evidence carefully and do not accept this theory. As the example of many ventures in the communications industry shows, good practice in the interest of public enlightenment is good business as well. The agencies of mass communication are not serving static wants. Year by year they are building and transforming the interests of the public. They have an obligation to elevate rather than to degrade them.

The Commission comes out strongly in favor of reform from within the press itself, as McLuhan recommended "individual act of the will." This emphasis is the more valuable in an era char acterized by increasing dependence on mass agencies (chiefly "th government") to overcome the malpractices of other mass agencies Legislation, the Commission points out, is of dubious efficiency an unpredictable application: "each definition of an abuse invites abus of the definition." No solution can be offered that does not involv clarification of the nature of an age when "institutions" of all kind act to smother individual judgment.

South African Rock Paintings

A writer in the London *Geographical Magazine* for June sug gests that at last the authorities are alive to the value of ancien records. The Bureau of Archaeology in South Africa has starte a systematic study of the prehistoric records in the country and the careful preservation. (Strictly, prehistory in South Africa only te minated in the seventeenth century.) The article points out th significance of the relationship between rock shelter art as found i South Africa and elsewhere:

> The Bushmen themselves claim to have come from the north, and they have been equated with the "Tenks," whose dancing powers were well known to the Egyptians of the earlier dyn-

> asties . . . perhaps the most interesting similarities are those between the early phases in Southern Rhodesia and the well known rock shelter art found in Eastern Spain, a part of which seemingly dates to late palaeolithic times.

This linking of paleolithic art in Spain and Africa is another factor supporting the statements that Africa, as a continent, appeared before Europe, and that "nowhere does a more extraordinary variability of types exist, from black to almost white, from gigantic men to dwarfish races" than in Africa, and "this only because of their forced isolation. The Africans have never left their continent for several hundred thousands of years" (*S.D.* II, 368, 425).

Atlantean Ancestry

The association of Spanish rock paintings with those found in Rhodesia, and the Bushman tradition of having come from the north, are further evidence for the view that—

> Europe in the quaternary epoch was very different from the Europe of today. . . . It was united to North Africa—or rather what is now North Africa—by a neck of land running across the present Straits of Gibraltar—North Africa thus constituting a species of extension of Spain, while a broad sea washed the great basin of the Sahara (*S.D.* II, 740).

For these and similar reasons it is becoming less difficult even for accepted authorities to admit, as a working hypothesis, that the artistic merit shown to be possessed by Bushmen from the most ancient times, as well as by Paleolithic man generally, may point to an Atlantean ancestry. (For examples of paleolithic art, see Sir William Boyd Dawkins, *Cave-hunting,* 1874, and the picture reproduced in *The Secret Doctrine,* II, 720, after Sir Archibald Geikie, director-general, Geological Survey, United Kingdom.) All the facts go to prove "that the evolution of the races has ever proceeded in a series of rises and falls, that man, perhaps, is as old as incrustated earth, and—if we can call his Divine ancestor 'Man'—far older still" (*S.D.* II, 721).

Primitive Man

Like a coastal erosion, indentations thus continue to be made in the hard rocks of scientific dogma, and noticeable changes are seen in the modern attitude toward ancient and present-day primi-

tive man. "Even a savage," wrote H. P. Blavatsky, "can disc white from black, good from bad, and deceit from sincerity a truthfulness." Not as much can be said of many specimens "civilized" humanity! The growing importance of the more lightened point of view on early Man is clearly indicated by D Meyer Fortes, Reader in Social Anthropology at Oxford Universi Broadcasting on "The White Man's Impact on Primitive Societ (*The Listener,* London, June 12), Dr. Fortes asks the pertine question, in assessing "civilized" and "primitive" standards: "I what objective test can we measure degrees of backwardness as b tween a civilization in which twins are suffocated at birth and o in which whole cities are wiped out from the air?" And if a moderns feel complacent at the thought that at least witch-beli is extinct and can never be revived, they should think over t implications of Fuehrer-worship in the twentieth century, and re a recent work, *Four Centuries of Witch-Beliefs,* by R. Trevor Davi (London, 1947), noting the influence of an exploded superstitio upon the constitutional history of England down to the 17th centur

Anthropology and "Egocentric Illusion"

Dr. Meyer Fortes identifies the method of science with a hab of thought which holds the belief that the universe, including ma is subject to laws that can be discovered by means of experime and observation. This is fairly said, provided that those practisi the method do not also believe that the laws to which the univer and man are subject are known in their entirety to the modern i vestigator. But he is on sure ground when he says:

> The fact that primitive peoples generally clamour for more once they have been introduced to our civilisation, is proof only of our technical superiority. On the plane of values we can only compare societies from the standpoint of what Toynbee has called "the egocentric illusion of our own civilisation." We can compare them objectively however in respect of certain abstract characteristics which we can discover by the method of science. We can justifiably, though only tentatively as yet, contrast the stability and integration of many primitive societies with the instability and lack of integration observable in our own society at the present time. We can draw attention to the material and spiritual security the individual often enjoys in a primitive society, and contrast it with the condition of western man, too often adrift in a society

> which he thinks of as a hostile Leviathan dictating his life from the outside. We can study the significance of common values symbolised in supernatural beliefs that are consistent with the structure of society and with the other elements of the culture; and then contrast this with what we see in a society where conflicting values and contradictory beliefs govern thought and action. The method of science can thus give us, not a scale for evaluating societies, but an understanding of the nature of society.

Decay and Reincarnation

Stability and integration, however, are not the marks of all primitive races, any more than they are of the world today. Nor is it true to say (as is so often asserted) that the extinction of a primitive race is necessarily or wholly due to exploitation by "civilized" man. There are, of course, always "apocalyptic dangers" surrounding the human race, as Donald Culross Peattie points out in his *The Road of a Naturalist* (1946). But they are not confined to enemies, human or microbic, nor is it altogether the case (as he suggests it is) that our sins against each other "are due to the rudimentary newness of this thing called intelligence," though misuse of mind is an important factor in selfishness. The truth is that Reincarnation has both individual and ethnic applications in any consideration of the passing of primitive art or civilization. On the subject of the dying races, the *Secret Doctrine* (II, 780) states: "The tide-wave of incarnating Egos has rolled past them, to harvest experience in more developed and less senile stocks; and their extinction is hence a Karmic necessity. Some extraordinary and *unexplained* statistics as to Race extinction are given in de Quatrefages' *Human Species*, p. 428 *et. seq.* No solution, except on the occult lines, is able to account for these."

"How Stands Our Press?"

A *Human Events* pamphlet by Oswald Garrison Villard, *How Stands Our Press?*, evaluates the U.S. press record during World War II, and the judgment, in brief, is—

> that the press has not emerged from the war with enhanced prestige, that its hold upon the people is not strengthened, that very serious indictments can be brought against its wartime policies, and that it cannot assert that it fully defended individual freedoms

> or those of minorities, or guarded the people against unconstitutional encroachments by the Chief Executive. It did not insist upon Congressional supervision of the conduct of the war, as in previous hostilities. Worst of all, out of mistaken patriotic desire to serve the country, it betrayed its trust to the people in that it assented to and accepted in February, 1941, a voluntary censorship, under cover of which the Roosevelt Administration hid from both the Congress and the people the commission of overt hostile acts contrary to the Constitutional provision that the Congress alone may declare war.

In documenting these charges, Mr. Villard rehearses striking instances of distortion and suppression of fact and truth, with which readers should acquaint themselves. Even when facts are given in news accounts, the overall impression may still be totally false. Villard, in commenting on the Commission's Report, stresses particularly the statement: "It is no longer enough to report *the fact* truthfully. It is now necessary to report *the truth about the fact.*"

SOME MEANS WILL BE FOUND

For all his disappointment at the lack of "real editorial independence and integrity" (see also Lookout, THEOSOPHY XXXIV, 317, 435), Villard ends on a hopeful note:

> It is impossible, however, to believe that some means of circulating the printed word will not be found, to attack evil, to uphold the truth, to spring to the rescue of the weak, the oppressed and the unfortunate, to assail those entrenched in privilege, to tear from faithless servants of the people their garments of hypocrisy or unrighteousness, to set forth what is actually going on in this suddenly shrunken world in which we live. Years ago I prophesied that the day might come when we should return to pamphleteering, if necessary, as did the American patriots in the years leading up to the Revolution—with Alexander Hamilton, as a boy of 18, prominent among them.

Theosophists may echo this hope, and add to it their aspiration to arouse the *Manas* of the race, by all means in their power. Free speech is important only as it is availed of for the promulgation of ideas, and only as these are increasingly compounded of sincerity and intelligence. The reports on the press, dealt with above, may mark a new era of "criticism and consciousness" in which may arise a better instrument for freeing thought.

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